

MORTALITY IN TENNESSEE

General Mortality

- ! Expectation of life for a Tennessee newborn in 1998 was 74.5 years. This compares with 74.8 years in 1997. Life expectancy at birth in 1998 was 78.0 years for females and 71.2 years for males. Distinguishing the Tennessee population by race and gender, life expectancies for white females, black females, white males, and black males in descending order were 79.1 years, 73.6 years, 72.4 years, and 65.0 years. Corresponding 1997 figures were 79.2, 73.1, 72.2, and 64.3 years. Thus, blacks of both genders registered at least a half-year annual gain, while white females manifested a very small loss in life expectancy at birth and white males experienced a very small gain.
- ! The 1998 crude death rate in Tennessee was 981 deaths per 100,000 population. Higher mortality among males than females was reflected in their respective crude death rates of 1,024 and 941 deaths per 100,000 population. The crude death rate of whites, 996 deaths per 100,000, exceeded that of blacks, 950 per 100,000. This differential is explained by the younger age composition of blacks as compared to whites. Once the death rate was adjusted for age differences¹, the death rate for blacks rose to 1,279 per 100,000 and that for whites declined to 934 per 100,000. Respective age-adjusted death rates for black males, white males, black females, and white females were 1,688, 1,200, 1,019, and 752 per 100,000 population.
- ! Crude death rates for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents of Tennessee were 952 and 1,002, respectively. After age-adjustment¹, the rate for the metropolitan population exceeded that for the nonmetropolitan population, 1,006 versus 955 per 100,000. Further differentiating the population by race and gender, black male residents in metropolitan areas exhibited the highest age-adjusted death rate, 1,793 per 100,000. The rate for black males in nonmetropolitan areas was second highest at 1,434 deaths per 100,000. By contrast, the lowest age-adjusted death rates were registered for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan white females, at 746 and 755 deaths per 100,000 population, respectively. Regardless of whether they resided in metropolitan or nonmetropolitan areas, black females had lower age-adjusted death rates (1,051 and 929) than white males (1,182 and 1,212 per 100,000, respectively).
- ! Annualized age-adjusted mortality rates for 1996-1998 are higher in metropolitan regions than nonmetropolitan regions of Tennessee at 1,016 and 954 per 100,000¹, respectively. Among Tennessee Health Department regions, the Mid-Cumberland Region had the lowest annualized age-adjusted death rates (902.6), while Shelby County had the highest (1,081.1). Three rural counties had the highest 1996-98

¹All age-adjusted rates use the year 2000 standard million population.